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United Nations reform: measures and proposals

The impact of the implementation of pilot projects on budgetary practices and procedures

Note by the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. This note is presented pursuant to section II, paragraph 11, of General Assembly resolution 52/220 of 22 December 1997, in which the Secretary-General was requested to present a report on the impact of the implementation of pilot projects on the budgetary practices and procedures as well as on the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations.

2. The Secretary-General indicated in his report entitled "Renewing the United Nations: a programme for reform" (A/51/950) that he would take steps to delegate maximum authority, responsibility and full accountability to line managers for the management of human and financial resources (action 23). The Secretary-General has initiated pilot projects on delegation of authority, which will provide a practical context for greater delegation of authority and flexibility within existing rules and regulations. In response to section III, paragraph 72, of resolution 52/220, a report on the implementation of the pilot project at the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean will be submitted to the Commission at its twenty-seventh session for its final approval.

II. Framework for delegation of authority, responsibility and accountability

3. The General Assembly establishes the basic regulations for managing financial and human resources. The Secretary-General, in his capacity as the Chief Administrative Officer of the Organization, has the responsibility of implementing the regulations, including amplifying rules for specific resource management purposes.

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4. The Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations provide a legal framework for the Secretary-General's authority and responsibility in financial administration. Rule 101.1 states that "the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management shall be responsible for the administration of these Rules on behalf of the Secretary-General. The Under-Secretary-General may delegate authority under these Rules as appropriate to other officials". The authority for the administration of financial resources is, in practice, delegated to the Controller.

5. Similarly, authority for the management of staff is delegated to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources. Under the pilot project, further authority has been given to programme and line managers in several areas of human resources management, such as promotion and placement up to the First Officer level, classification of General Service posts up to the G-6 level and administration of some allowances and staff entitlements. As requested by the General Assembly in section II, paragraph 6, of its resolution 51/226 of 3 April 1997, a report will be submitted to the Assembly at its fifty-third session on delegation of authority in human resources management.

III. Conclusions

6. It is, therefore, within the authority and responsibility of the Secretary-General, to delegate authority and responsibility to programme and line managers. Authority delegated in the context of implementing the pilot projects would not impact either the procedures or the existing Financial Regulations and Rules. As part of the management reform adopted by the General Assembly, it is the Secretary-General's intention to pursue delegation of authority as an instrument for management improvement. In the event of delegation beyond the authority of the Secretary-General, he will seek approval from the General Assembly.